

ERAP PROJECT REPORT

JULY 1 - JULY 10

1100 WASHINGTON

REPORT FROM ANN ARBOR
July 10, 1964

The ERAP Executive Committee met in Cleveland, July 7 and 8, to discuss the early weeks of the summer organizing activity and to determine, in certain areas, direction for projects and the central staff during the coming weeks and months. All projects were represented except Hazard and Louisville. What follows is a brief summary report of the Cleveland meeting.

Reporter: Ken McEldowney

A. Communication between projects and between ERAP and the outside world.

1. It was agreed that the ERAP central staff should continue to distribute a weekly internal newsletter for staff members to include reports from the city projects of a "non-explosive, strategic and programmatic nature." By "non-explosive," the Committee intended that the reports avoid inclusion of information on such highly sensitive matters as local personalities which, if it ever became known to the person or persons discussed, could result in the destruction of the project. But reports should include information on strategy and program, even if it could potentially cause trouble for a project. Stress was placed on the trust people had in each other and on the importance of including information about strategy and program to improve the interchange of ideas among projects.

Representatives from a couple of projects stated that they would be unable to comply with this resolution. They explained that they were extremely worried about people in their cities uncovering the information contained in the staff newsletter and that they could not accept the decision of the Committee that the newsletter could be handled discreetly.

This view was attacked by others who stressed that other projects would benefit greatly from sharing the experience and plans of other projects and that the Committee would be unable to perform its functions without full information.

2. Publicity on ERAP projects is to be solicited, but in all cases the concerns of the local projects must be taken into consideration. The debate showed that while some of the projects welcomed national and local publicity, others believed that it would be harmful at this stage of development. It was agreed that there is to be consultation with a project before something it does is mentioned in publicity releases.

B. The end-of-the-summer conference to be a combination of project evaluation

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STRATEGY

and campus programming.

It was felt that there was a need for project staffs to come together at the end of the summer to discuss experiences, program and strategy. But it was also stressed that ERAP staffers and chapter leaders should discuss campus programming and organizing for the coming year.

A few committee members opposed holding such a conference and said that the real need was for a large conference of 400-500 people from projects and campuses. They believed that such a meeting, if organized around a program of action, would result in 200 new SDS members and perhaps 10 new chapters. This concept was opposed by most who voiced several objections including the lack of time to prepare a conference of this size, that we needed to discuss further what our campus "program" should be before it is announced, and that what the organization needed at this time was a small intense meeting of committed ERAP staff and campus people to examine what a viable campus program would consist of.

The final decision will be made by a special committee (including the SDS President, National Secretary and ERAP Director) appointed by the last national council meeting.

C. Local projects to have discretion over whether or not to become involved in programs that should logically continue beyond the end of the summer but in no case should ERAP resources--personnel or monetary--be committed without the approval of the fall executive committee.

During debate it was concluded that it is too early in the summer to be able to determine which of the projects should continue and whether there will be adequate resources to support them. Therefore, no project should assume national ERAP support for its program in the fall.

D. The Committee asked that Rennie Davis go to Louisville and possibly Hazard to investigate the status of these two projects. There was concern because neither project was represented at the Cleveland meeting and there had been little communication from either

Perhaps more important than the actual decisions made at the meeting were the discussions both formal and informal among project representatives. Topics ranged from research needs to continuation of projects and methods to save money on food. Many of the Committee members discovered that others were working on similar programs or with similar groups and were able to agree to coordinate further research and action.

The next meeting of the executive Committee was set for August 8 and will probably be held in Philadelphia:

REPEAT: All projects must send a statement of money on hand as of July 1 and a list of weekly expenditures and income since July 1. Please. Please.

The first report states Clinton Hill to be an interracial community, 65% Negro and 10% Puerto Rican. This is somewhat misleading, and a more detailed analysis and perception of what our constituency is has led to long and not always fruitful staff re-evaluation of strategy. Early in the game we realized that the whites in the area were not of the kind discussed as immediate participants in the "interracial alliance of the poor." They are for the most part lower-middle class, and live at the extreme west of this community, which, except for that small area, has become almost completely Negro in the last 10 years. A group of whites was arbitrarily included by our hosts as a part of the project area: a working-class homeowner area of Eastern Europeans even more remote from the center of the project area. Neither of these groups share to any extent the acute housing, recreation, education and police problems that the lower class Negroes share; we do not know what the unemployment in those areas is - there may be a potential or incipient poverty there; at present such is not visible.

For purposes of organization, three areas exist within Clinton Hill: The Upper Hill contains the remaining whites, plus a major inroad of lower-middle and middle class Negroes, who are not in the majority there. There are trees in the streets, well-kept-up houses; the topics of discussion at Neighborhood Council meetings are cleanup campaigns, tree pruning, installation of stop signs, and "the number 84 problem" - the bad house on the block. The major argument which has been made for working in this area is that a movement which would improve community services here would create employment for the unemployed of the lower hill. Some project members are housed in the Upper Hill, but the group has decided not to work in the all-white area immediately; we have a commitment to working on the Upper Hill with CHNC existing block groups, but as yet most of our efforts have been focused elsewhere.

The middle hill (the term is ours) is in rapid transition; it is the few-block-wide strip just west of the office; most of it is in the rehabilitation area which the city is planning to start action in within a half-year. Poor people already live there, but a large number of homeowners remain; the city plans to rehabilitate it, to keep it like the upper hill, to eject the poor people in it. It is in this area that our strategic considerations have been most confused and difficult; both lower-middle and lower class people live there; both homeowners and tenants in large numbers; unemployed-welfare people and those who live fairly well but are threatened by heavy mortgages, rehabilitation, and automation. What kind of program do we work out for this area? One aimed at the lower class, who undoubtedly will soon take over the area unless the city (or we) take major steps to have something else happen? Or at both groups, finding common issues?

The lower hill contains a much larger group of poor people; some of the houses are still owner-occupied, but the rate of tenancy is over 80% everywhere, often higher. The area is certainly not the worst in

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the city; but bad housing, high rents, bad schools, no recreation facilities, arrogant and irresponsible police, and few city services plague the area. Despite the attractive appearance of most of the blocks, there are large tenements spotted throughout the area, and in one pleasant-looking block, behind the facades and trees, live approximately 1,000 people. The racial composition is all Negro and Puerto Rican, the latter perhaps a fifth of the total population. A few white homeowners remain. Most of the housing is held by absentee landlords; a good number of the small (3-6 family) houses are occupied by the owner and his friends and relatives. The majority of previous participants in CHNC functions are from the home-owner group. The strategic questions in program here are: shall program be based solely around the poor-tenant group, which is the vast majority, or should the homeowner base be built upon as well, with program appealing to both groups? and perhaps more importantly, what is the reaction of the other groups in Clinton Hill to a vigorous tenant-poor-oriented Negro movement in the lower hill?

PROGRAM

Although closely tied to the discussion of strategy, the question of program per se sheds a new light, or at least clarifies, the strategic debate; some members of the group advocate discussion of strategy primarily as it comes up in program debate.

Recreation: There is a desperate need in the lower and middle hill for recreation facilities; this area is behind much of the city in recreation services; the traffic problem creates acute danger for kids in the streets - one hears of accidents regularly. It is a problem which evokes an immediate response from mothers and kids, clearly the most vocal elements in the Negro community; and it has practically no divisive effect, either racially or along class lines. A relatively strong movement just around this one issue could probably result in fairly strong block organization, introduction of militant tactics, and probably reaching every group in the area; unemployed could be reached through the direct action aspect (and were, I think, during the police demonstration last week); there is some employment potential in a recreational expansion program; mothers as supervisors of play streets, etc.; men in construction, maintenance, and direction. The problem is complicated by the existence of park plans in the small (14 block) rehabilitation area; the lower hill is scheduled for demolition, to be replaced by light industry and some middle and upper income housing.

Housing: We've had a long discussion on program for housing, coming to the general conclusion that a movement which put the blame and pressure on the city, rather than the individual landlord, would both push solutions into the public sector, and have some relevance to the rest of the program. The urban removal and rehabilitation area complicates the issue, plus rent control is a difficult issue with constitutional block from Trenton. But the issue is open-ended, with some action very possible.

Police: Demands both for more protection and for "get off my back" presumably reflect different groups in the community; a highly volatile issue, which we've decided to skirt as part of program, using it only

as it comes up to defend community people.

Employment: Unemployment is high in the lower hill, the possibility of underemployment and unemployment in the upper hill unexplored; automation threatens the whole area, and Newark's whole rate of unemployment is high in relation to the state and nation. A good number of unemployed come into the office - we get their names and addresses, and often talk at length with them, but really have nothing to offer them as yet. We plan, through the research office of the National Committee on Full Employment in New York City, to get up a survey form on which we can systematically evaluate the problems of unemployment among the people we have contact with; any further program, other than a complete evaluation of and possible testing of the existing retraining programs, is yet to come.

The general program for the summer, as I see it, is to use the recreation and city service (including sanitation, health, police, etc.) issues as mobilizing techniques to build up block organizations, and to use the housing issue both in this way and with employment as the real issues which block groups will focus on in the long run.

RESEARCH

Our relations with the National Committee on Full Employment Research Staff are somewhat ambiguous, but seem increasingly fruitful. They are producing informational and programmatic material on the major areas of interest. Spot and area research we are doing ourselves: each person is head (keeper?) of an area. The present ones are

unions	civil rights
urban renewal	civil and neighborhood
employment	business and banking
police-lawyers-crime	schools-recreation
politics	taxes and economic structure
housing	Puerto Ricans
welfare-social security	

Some of these are functioning; others have been postponed because of block work.

BLOCK ORGANIZATION

A number of block organizations have been revived or begun: the Play street across the street, which drivers and police don't respect, has been the focal point of the Bigelow group, which meets at the office and has a number of really good activist women, and mobs of children; The Hunterdon block group has begun and carried on a fight for better police services, removal of violations in traffic, and a play street; this included a picket at the police station which got some concessions as well as mobilizing 100 for the picket and 200 at the mass meeting. The Hillside group, also on the lower hill, is getting together a group to face the mayor and council next week; the Bergen Street group is trying to reconcile the distinct interests there, and are trying to get a 2-block long meeting early next week; Ridgewood is having a meeting about and in one large apartment with very bad conditions; another Hunterdon block (maybe two) will be organized in

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the coming week; staff people are working on three other blocks, with less tangible results.

Kates
The Arabian Stompers : There are several precision drill marching groups organized in the area through the schools but not directly supported by them. Girls between the ages of 12 and 16 participate. The group with which we are concerned is the Arabian Stompers. They were in danger of losing their right to practice on a school playground three times a week. Although their supervisor sold them out, with the support of Zweig and Steinberg, several mothers, and members from the CHNC, the girls waged a successful march on the Board of Education on June 30 where they performed in front of the building for half an hour. They got their demands. This small victory was another step in our winning acceptability within the community.

STAFF

Internal
 Schedules for cooking, cleaning, and office are working out well. Staff meetings are difficult, because with widely differing viewpoints and experience and attitudes, it is difficult to decide whether overall strategy, immediate policy or tactics should be discussed. Our 4-5 meetings a day schedule makes finding time for full staff meetings difficult. We have finally (we hope) settled housing for the central apartment; where many staff members will be for the summer is still up in the air; food budget is working out, eating quite well for 70¢ a day.

Internal Education: Various talks on Newark politics, code enforcement, etc., have been the main sources of our education. There has been little time for group discussion around major topics such as the Cleveland group has outlined.

Special Topics: amusement for the crowd

1. Choice quotations from an anxious letter from our landlady. We have been evicted from the same apartment twice but are managing to hold on. "If you are representatives of 'Students for a Democratic Society,' God help America; when you get through we'll have a new Russia!"
 2. Of funds and fun: We were recently treated to two dinners, one nightclub in New York which cost, as far as we can figure out, a minimum of \$200. Since we saw no way to divert this attention flowered upon us, we ate and drank enough to last us the week. We hope this will meet the approval of our fellow organizers. Group morale as you may have surmised is somewhat high at this point.

Your friendly reporters: Carl Wittmann (in absentia) Harriet Stulman, and Jenny Roper.

342 ULRICH STREET

JULY 7

In the past week we have completed the research necessary to begin organizing for the CFFN rent strike. Our criteria for picking areas were: one, bad housing; two, a high proportion of houses owned by a few slumlords; three, size, 40 - 80 units -- less could mean difficulty in getting enough people to begin, more would be too much for one person to handle; four, we felt that it would be good to choose areas slated for renewal. These areas will be torn down, without any provisions for relocation being made, in the next one or two to five years, and by that time these should be organization in the areas strong enough to deal with the issue, an issue we believe should be dealt with.

We researched land ownership at the county courthouse; urban renewal plans and housing conditions maps we got from the city planning commission; we went out to look over the areas to determine their size and what sort of community sentiment they have.

On Monday, July 6, we are actually beginning the door to door organizing work. By the middle of the week we should have people from the Young Adult Council (YAC) working with us on organizing the strike. We are looking forward to having them work with us, since the experience should be as instructive for them as for us, and also, greater numbers will mean getting more accomplished for the movement here.

We have been marching on Monday, Wednesday and Friday evenings with the CFFN down to the cop house to protest police brutality (even bystanders were beaten and two pregnant women lost their children because they were clubbed in the stomach).

On the level of lesser decisions (all wandering ERAP project members take notice) we have decided to discourage overnight visitors except in case of emergency because of the disruption such visits could cause.

We haven't spent all of our time marching or researching; we have been socializing all this Saturday and Sunday (the 4th and 5th): We went to a barbecue on the 4th and to Rev. Hewitt's church on Sunday -- he is from a nearby white town, and has lost almost all of his congregation because he has championed the movement in Chester so strongly. In the afternoon we went on a picnic with YAC -- football and relay races. And in the evening we had Stanley Branche, leader of CFFN, over for dinner.

On next Tuesday two of us are going to help block a door to stop an eviction, the first casualty of the rent strike. We decided that most of our effort to stop the eviction should be to organize men to block the door rather to hop around the city from door to door. Sorry.

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JUNE 23

Three new field workers arrived from New York to find that the Appalachian Project was suffering its first major set-back at the hands of the Hazard Police Department. Field workers Kay Moller and George Goss were arrested on trumped up charges of public drunkenness and drunken driving. This first case of police harassment effectively knocked out the Hazard Office's transportation by confiscating Goss's license and grounding two vehicles on registration technicalities.

Miss Moller and Goss spent the night in jail where Miss Moller's purse was searched and a letter stolen. The two defendants repeatedly asked to make a telephone call but were denied until 11:00 A.M. the next day.

Two days later in police court the arresting officers gave a contradictory and confusing testimony. One officer explained that both defendants were in control of the car and themselves but that both smelled of liquor and that Goss's eyes were red. Goss has one glass eye. Another officer that saw the defendants at the police station said that Miss Moller was "one of those union hall kids" and that Goss was "the drunkest guy he had ever seen". The arresting officer admitted that there had been no traffic violations and that Goss had been in control of the car.

Former Judge Courtney Wells was the defending lawyer. Judge Wells who remained unbiased during the picket movement, was running for County Judge with the support of the miners the day Berman Gibson and nine other men were arrested for robbery and assault and battery. Judge Wells lost the election by 400 votes. The ten were acquitted recently in Whitesburg, Kentucky.

Because they are not guilty, the defendants decided not to testify until the case is taken to a higher court. The two were found guilty and the case is being appealed to the County Circuit Court.

In a statement made immediately after the trial, Goss said: "It's no surprise that the Police Department of Hazard would now harass the Appalachian Committee for Full Employment as the police and courts have fought the organization of labor in the past." Miss Moller said, "These are trumped up charges made in a further attempt to stop the unemployed of this area from effectively organizing. The police often follow us through town and keep a close watch on the office. The police have stopped me on several previous occasions, checked my drivers license, and asked me whom I was working for."

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REPORT FROM THE CLEVELAND
COMMUNITY PROJECT

2908 JAY AVENUE

JULY 5

Survey

During the second week of operation, the CCP (Cleveland Community Project) continued the house-to-house contact with people in the Near West Side of Cleveland (the activity which occupied most of our time during the first week.) Each of the five teams of people continued to speak with persons in its particular geographical area - "turf". The questions drew out information concerning:

- the perceptions that individuals had about the neighborhood and their own "condition"; e.g. feelings about the possibilities of finding a job if unemployed, attitude towards landlord, feelings about being on welfare.
- Information about the neighborhood: e.g. changes in groups of people in the neighborhood, information about schools, housing, recreation, possibilities of credit, etc.
- discovery of potential organizable possibilities - either as leaders or participants.

Underlying our questions to people was the search for an issue around which people in a turf could organize, and the hope that the above information (a) and (b) would, upon analysis, supply us with this "issue."

Although during the first week members of most of the teams (2 members in four teams, 3 members in one team) usually worked together, during the second week people began to operate individually within their particular turfs. Many of us found that working alone was more successful because:

- it is perhaps easier for the person being asked questions to deal with one questioner rather than two.
- the questioner is freed from worrying about how his partner is reacting to his method of questioning.

Some of the boys, however, felt that it was easier to get responses when a girl was present and most people agreed that working alone was far more tiring than working with another person.

In order to overcome the lack of contact with other people's turfs, we developed an exchange program whereby people would spend time working with members of other teams in other turfs. This not only helped us to better understand the other turfs but also afforded the opportunity of observing the different interviewing techniques which people had developed.

Our impressions and understanding of the neighborhood at the end of the second week were fairly similar to those which we had at the end of the first week. The house-to-house contact during the second week was of value in so far as

- Results*
- it reinforced and substantiated our first analysis and understanding (derived from the first week.)
 - led to the discovery of more potential participants in an organization
 - developed the skill and confidence of each of us in our own ability to talk to and deal with people in the Near West Side.

It is generally agreed that the house-to-house contact was of value in so far as it gave us a general feeling for the neighborhood,

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certain information about the area, development of our own skill in talking to people and led to the discovery of potential participants in an organization.

However, we have not, in at least three out of the five "turfs" been able to find issues around which to organize; nor are we satisfied that continued house-to-house contact will help us along this line. The feeling by the middle of the second week was one of frustration in continuing the house-to-house contact unless some issue or plan could be developed around which to focus questions. Therefore, Saturday was spent analyzing the information which was found, and a new plan of activity was developed.

Issues?

One of the main concerns in the choice of a possible issue was of finding one which we could envisage as leading to something more than a neighborhood improvement association; in the analysis below, the pre-occupation with this concern will be clear.

Lake-View Terrace Project

Background: 1500-1700 people live in it; about 50% of these are above 62 years of age. 51% of the people are on some form of welfare including social security. The average family income is \$2100 while the maximum income which a family of four can have if they are to remain in the project is \$3800. 23% of the total income must go for rent.

Proposals:

- People in the project voice concern about the number of Negroes moving in (thirty Negro families are at present residents); organize a neighborhood organization with a bi-racial (interracial) approach to deal with the problem.
- focus on younger people (i.e. parents and children rather than working with elderly people) There are constant disputes over petty issues among project members over carrying out responsibilities such as emptying incinerators, etc. These disputes are often settled by the intervention of the project director who hears about the disputes from one or both of the people involved in it. Form tenant councils to deal with the disputes.
- organize people around grievances against the project management.
- organize people around common grievances such as inadequate welfare, unemployment, etc.

Analysis:

Organizing around unemployment is possible, however this would require working with other turfs due to the small number of unemployed persons who have been found.

Although organizing around grievances against the project management might seem ideal, it is, in fact, not feasible at this time. The project inhabitants are far more concerned with fighting with their neighbors and with calling the management in to settle disputes; this coupled with the distrust of their neighbors makes it difficult to organize around this issue; it would require a complete reversal of attitude towards both their neighbors and the management in order for the group to simply come together.

The formation of a "grievance council" was thought to be the best alternative. It is an attempt to develop unity by discussing the problems (and

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sources) of disunity. The proposed grievance councils would serve a defined number of people (project units) by acting as the authority to which people come to settle grievances, supplanting the project management in this sphere of activity. The situation which now exists is one in which people inform upon one another to the management and are thus both isolated from one another and dependent upon the management. If the council could successfully operate, it might remove this particular form of dependency and at the same time create a feeling of unity so as to allow for the possibility of organizing around other issues (welfare, grievances against the management), the grievance council itself possibly being the base of this new group.

There is the real danger that the council would be controlled by a group of people who would use it in such a way as to merely exacerbate the petty disputes through more formalized gossip, etc. A second problem is presented by the fact that the project management would probably welcome such a council, thus removing the possibility of conflict which may or may not be necessary for unity and which might be necessary for preventing the grievance council from stagnating at the "good neighborhood council" stage. Finally, there is our general concern that we are not directly dealing (when forming such a council) with the basic issues which produce the alienation of project residents and our fear that we will never reach those issues by this indirect approach. The project itself appears to be comfortable and pleasant to live in -- however, "the fact that the project is pretty and well-kept has very little to do with the lives of the people who live there in institutional poverty and constant insecurity." The real question which we are facing when dealing with the project involves the difficulty of uncovering the poverty which has been well-hidden from both outsiders and project residents.

The coming week will see no commitment to the councils by the CCP team. However, the house-to-house contact will be conducted in a more directed way: all the people in a specific housing unit will be spoken to (as opposed to spot-checking in many housing units) and the questions will focus on the specific idea of a grievance council. The plan will be re-evaluated at the end of the week.

Abbey Road Area

A. Recreation: lack of playground facilities was a common complaint and the city has not hard-topped an area which they promised to do. This might be an issue which would draw in the Appalachian residents who are younger and have more children (35% to 50% of the residents) and yet would not alienate the older European residents.

B. Housing: The same group of Appalachian people are mainly the renters in the area. And although many look to moving out of the area into the better suburbs, this is not a real possibility in the near future. The average rent is \$70 to \$80 for four rooms. People often move around within the neighborhood looking for better homes. The rooms are not usually rented by large realty companies but by individuals owning one or two homes. It is thought that it might be possible to develop a mechanism whereby people might use their rent to contribute towards the purchase of the homes. This might appeal not only to the renters

but also to the older members of the area who, afraid of land-values declining, would support the project on the assumption that potential ownership would create greater stability and more care for property. C. Education: A new Hicks school is supposed to be built by February 1965; however, delays in construction may lead to the creation of double-sessions in the old Hicks school. Protests against double sessions might be organized.

The education issue, due to its irrelevance during the next months seems to be a potential, rather than immediate, issue. The recreation issue has the danger of not leading to issues beyond itself. This week will be spent speaking to people about all three issues, particularly about the recreation issue and, at the same time, doing more thinking about how the recreation issue might lead to broader problems, might be turned into a "radicalizing" experience.

Jay Avenue, Clinton Street, Orchard Avenue

The remaining three turfs share certain basic similarities. In all three there is a scattering of Puerto Ricans, a large and increasing number of Appalachians, a number of native Clevelanders and a number of older, settled East Europeans (Hungarians, Slovaks, Rumanians). Only a small degree of unemployment and a slightly large number of people on welfare have been found. There has not appeared an issue such as schools, or recreation, around which to organize. Two of the three areas are largely composed of people in a lower-middle (upper-lower) class strata. Most of those from the Appalachian area have found jobs here (having left Appalachia due to lack of jobs) and thus look to the future with relative optimism.

The question has been raised as to whether these are the people that ERAP projects should be working with (as opposed to those in extreme poverty.) If we do work with them, can we find issues or do we have to concentrate on a way to raise their "aspiration level" and is this really possible to do? If we do find issues such as recreation, can we develop with the community an understanding of a relationship between a recreation problem and more fundamental problems? Should we instead work with the small group of unemployed and/or people on welfare on the assumption that they are the group of people which can be mobilized precisely because they are dealing with life and death problems? If the latter path is chosen, then it means combining turfs, and in the case of unemployed, it means moving beyond the Near West Side in order to draw more people into an organization.

During the coming week, teams will examine the possibilities of education, welfare, and unemployment issues and a study will be made of the credit structure. This will be done by a combination of research (reading and speaking with social workers about welfare; MDTA people about industries in the area, etc.) and by pooling the information on people from all three turfs and revisiting some of these people who might be particularly helpful in exploring specific areas (e.g. visiting some of the unemployed, visiting those who were particularly critical of the schools, etc.) It is hoped at the end of next week to be able to decide whether we want to continue different projects in different turfs or join together around a particular issues, such as welfare.

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Race Prejudice

One of the problems which we have faced during the past two weeks has been that of dealing with race prejudice. As we are working in an area in which no Negroes live and in which many people are prejudiced against Negroes at a time when the "Negro" is on everybody's mind, we have been confronted with the problem of what position we as individuals in the CCP should take when people ask us how we feel about the civil rights movement, or, more directly, about Negroes. Thus far, people have dealt differently with the problem by either being vague or by getting into a frank discussion with people. One lady has identified us as working for the NAACP while others have connected us with several ministers in the area who have been working in various ways for integration. The problem is complicated by the fact that we have a continuing relationship with CORE both informally and formally (Ollie is on the Cleveland CORE Employment Committee). This became a problem when Ollie was asked to appear as a representative of CORE with two other members of the CORE Employment Committee on a popular radio program to answer questions. We want to maintain relations with CORE and yet not jeopardize our ability to work in the Near West Side so that this sort of situation produces very real problems.

Established Organizations

We have been fortunate in being able to remain independent of any of the established organizations in the neighborhood (although no one of them is very strong); we have not accepted food or housing from any of them, but have maintained relations with them by showing interest in their programs. We have, through this contact, been able to meet several people with whom we can discuss our activities and, with at least one of them, discuss them very frankly along with plans for the future.

Internal Education

A morning was spent discussing community organization during which people presented analyses of material they had read written by Alinsky, Steve Max, N. Van Hoffman, Hagstrom on various social action programs and a brief discussion of the populists. Having never quite decided how we wanted our internal education program to relate to our work in the community, the discussion moved rather vaguely between various topics and we never really dealt thoroughly with questions raised by individuals in their presentations. Next week we will discuss problems of cities, using as reading material Jane Jacobs' Death and Life of American Cities.

Youth

We have not yet dealt with the problems of just how valuable it would be to work with youth in the neighborhood and how we would go about doing so if we decided it were a good thing to do.

LITTLE KNOWN FACTS

Joanie, Dickie and Dave would go 50 miles for a shower

Sharon, Dick and Joan spoke to 3 blobettes today

You can't type on the meat you're cooking

The answer to all the world's ills is a return to Truth and Justice

(via Mrs. Beaver)

"Enough, enough," she cried, "I'm satisfied."

Rennie is disrespectful with his elders

Each sex will inherently have its own advantages and disadvantages

(Cathy Wilkerson - "Rats, Washubs, and Block Organizations")

Ollie met two couples who were nitty-gritty married.

"I really don't think people around here know too much about America" Potter

The money is in zippers

REPORT FROM BOSTON

337 WESTERN, CAMBRIDGE

JUNE 25

The Boston Report this week will take the form of a report on a meeting held to discuss the possibilities of forming a group in Bedford which would be concerned with the issue of conversion.

The meeting was attended by five members of the Boston project, the Peace Secretary of the AFSC and his wife, and seven people from the Bedford community: A Meteorologist and an Astrophysicist at Hanscom Air Force Base, the chairman of the town selectmen, a local minister, two people that work at Mitre and one from Acoustics Research.

Chuck Levenstein started the meeting off with an introductory statement about SDS and the summer ERAP projects. He stated that the Boston project hoped to act as a catalyst in the formation of a group which would strive to meet the need in Bedford for planning for conversion. He emphasized the commitment of SDS to participatory democracy and the consequent hope that a citizen organization in Bedford could be formed which would deal with the issue of conversion. He then asked the group what they thought the possibilities for the formation of such a group in Bedford would be.

The response of the group is indicated by the following notes on comments made during the meeting by those attending.

The Areas Economic Situation

Boston is entering a new era. At present it has the highest per capita defense expenditure in the country, but it cannot be sure that defense contracts will continue to make up such a large portion of the local economy. There is a widespread belief that NASA will provide new contracts, although there is good reason to believe that this is unjustified. A study to determine what place NASA will have in the area's economy should be undertaken.

Presently the trend in jobs is away from manufacture toward service industries. Since 1959, Massachusetts has lost 59,000 jobs in manufacturing, but picked up 111,000 in services.

The economic issues of conversion need to be studied in detail. Conversion might well require a drastic change from a uni-directional economy with cost-plus contracting to a competitive market in consumer's goods. There would be a cut in employees and a great deal of job changes. These require better job placement bureaus and job retraining.

The importance of technological advances cannot be under-estimated. A fifty dollar tractor could open up new international markets. This is one of the areas where central planning is inadequate. Predictions can go askew.

Conversion: Its Local and National Impact

These problems suggest that conversion has international ramifications and would require massive Federal decisions. But we must also discover what linkage the defense group in Bedford has with peace-time industry so we can plan on the local level. One possible suggestion, which must be studied, is whether the Hanscom Air Force Base can be converted to a community or technical college for job training.

There were doubts as to whether a project in Bedford was sufficient. It was suggested that the project expand to Lexington and Concord.

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Although we were urged to acquire Federal Government studies and seek advice from the Chamber of Commerce, it was suggested that no major action from Government authorities could be expected. By way of underlining this problem, it was pointed out that the Governor's plan to study the problem in Massachusetts was rejected by the legislature.

What kind of survey should the project do? *cz*

Survey

The question was raised as to whether public planning for conversion was not contradictory to the aims of participatory democracy. Chuck Levenstein suggested that a good way to find community concerns was through an attitude survey. Such a survey could discover what people think about the problem of conversion. One of the participants agreed to help write a survey of Bedford residents. He felt that engineers were regarded as a privileged group without proper regard for their high cost of living. He suggested a study of people's skills. What would they do if they did not get another engineer's job? What would they do if they lost their jobs? How many engineers with a family have more than \$ 500 in the Bank?

The Project's Constituency

The Bedford community represents a wide mix of ethnic, religious, and occupational groupings. It is probable that less than 50 per cent of the population works in defense industries. The project was warned that we should not expect total community support. The Bedford Minute-men should be approached with care!

Strategic Suggestions

If we are to form an organization in Bedford, we must find a broad spectrum of citizens. Members of the group agreed to make arrangements to bring members of the Bedford Fellowship for Social Action and the Junior Chamber of Commerce to the next meeting.

It was stated that one of the elements in the success of the pledge against discrimination was its open-minded panel discussion that kicked off the drive. It was open-minded enough even to ask whether there was a problem. The chairman of the town board of selectmen added a word of warning that discussion about socialism could only alienate the community. If we are to sell our ideas we should use President Eisenhower's term -- military-industrial complex. Some of our most effective criticism of current defense spending could come on the basis that it is a boondoggle.

One of our concerns must be with the moral problems of working for defense industry, and the problems of conscience go beyond the bread, and butter issues of job loss. The local minister mentioned that parishioners had expressed this worry, but felt that they were struggling with the issue.

The next meeting of the group was scheduled for the next week.

AN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

As a special feature, the AA office research staff presents for your reading pleasure a group of excerpts from The Proletarian News which pertain to efforts during the thirties to organize the unemployed. The Proletarian News was the official organ of the Proletarian Party, a Trotskyite group that split from the Communist Party of the U-S.

Jan. 7, 1932 - "1. We must not attempt to break down the capitalist prejudices of the American workers by crude or tactless methods; for, by using such methods, we would lose their confidence and much valuable time and ground would be lost. 2. Don't fund raise for organizers or hold demonstrations. 3. Make them feel the Councils are theirs. 4. Don't impose a program. 5. Provide services now and class consciousness will ensue later at its own pace. 6. Pressure for better relief, the end to evictions from rented housing, and commissaries for the distribution of food." *14?*

May 15, 1932 - "The power structure takes over the Elkhart, Indiana, Unemployed Council."

December 1, 1932 - "60,000 parade in New York City to protest relief cuts."

February 1, 1933 - "Any plans (the Unemployed Councils) may formulate... must receive our hearty co-operation even when they are weak. Demonstrations have a good effect if they seem like mass movements both to the demonstrators and to the power structure. Don't show your weakness or endanger your people with small disturbances. Morale is most important. Don't force control over the Councils or make the Unemployed Council a party appendage. Tolerate all political shades. Prevent dissention by promoting impartial policies."

November 1, 1935 - A SHORT HISTORY OF EFFORTS TO ORGANIZE UNEMPLOYED IN THE US

"At the time of Coxey's army in 1894 organizing was very difficult because the unemployed thought that their unemployment was only temporary. In the early 30's the Communist Party organized the Unemployed Councils. Along with their organizing they sponsored self-help activities and pressured for immediate demands. They increased, and focused their attention more on pressuring the power structure. Although they had the membership to form state organizations, there was a great fluctuation in membership. Faction fights and lack of active co-operation hurt them badly. In 1933 the National Unemployment League was formed from groups in several states. When the C.U.A. put people back to work, membership rapidly declined. Then when the C.U.A. terminated, organization increased. Early in 1934 Chicago workers organized the Illinois Workers Council. Early in 1935 the Workers Alliance of America had organized thousands of people in 34 states. The WAA and the national Unemployed League attempted a merger. The WAA was the strongest organization of unemployed in U.S. history. Their strength can be largely attributed to their close harmony with the trade unions and the fact that their members picketed rather than scabbed.

The major problems involved in organizing the unemployed are lack of financial support for organizers, lack of indigenous leadership, the competition of elements which desire the organization to serve merely as a social club, and cutbacks in relief which encourage hopelessness. A good program should combine activity to service individual grievances with pressure for broader concessions from the government. Education is needed to hold the organization together and to avoid sell-outs."

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